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# Why Viet Nam?

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long as it supports their position. The loopholes in his logic are glaring and numerous. This "man in the mud" or "foot-soldier's" approach to the present Southeast Asian conflict lacks depth and any understanding of the political, diplomatic, or strategic implications of the decisions that have to be made. It is truly unfortunate that the story of U.S. mistakes in Vietnam (and there is no denying that there have been many) could not have been told more perceptively with less vehemence and without the blinding sparks of a grinding stone. As John Barkham said in the *Saturday Review* concerning this book, "Neither dove nor hawk will derive comfort from this frontline report of the Vietnam war . . ." And it should also be added, ". . . nor will they gain any value from this book."

C.O. WAKEMAN

Commander, U.S. Navy

Trager, Frank N. *Why Viet Nam?* New York: Praeger, 1966. 238p. (DS 557 .A6T63)

To the serious planner or policymaker, this book probably would be somewhat elementary. However, it is considered ideal for the individual who simply wants to become more conversant on the subject of Vietnam or who desires a broader historical base upon which to evaluate America's current policy in relation to Southeast Asia. This policy, according to the author, is clear and is based on a determination to contain further Communist advances in that area, while assisting the independent states to retain their freedom and to build up or to rebuild their economies. As for Vietnam, the United States is there by treaty and agreement and by invitation. She should legally, morally, and in every other sense do what is required to stop the invasion and help the Vietnamese stamp out the insurrection. Those who would advocate the Geneva Agreements as a basis for peace negotiations should be reminded that neither the United States nor the Republic of Vietnam was signatory to these Agreements. Settling nothing,

they simply made it possible for the Communists to continue to apply their revolutionary line, the promotion of "wars of national liberation," in mainland Southeast Asia. The American commitment to the Republic of Vietnam, in the several stages of its development under Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson, as endorsed by the United States Congress, stands. It is conceivable that at some future date such obligations may be withdrawn or changed. But for the present, and until they are repudiated, they cannot be denied. It is to the honor of the United States that she has fulfilled a solemnly undertaken obligation. The critical analysis of French colonialist policies, as contained in this book, will undoubtedly stimulate the reader to a keener awareness of conditions and policies in other areas of the world which could, potentially, serve as the "cement of the negative" to unite the Communists with others in a common cause.

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